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RR RUEHAST RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHIK RUEHLH RUEHLN RUEHNEH RUEHPOD
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FM AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0990
INFO AFGHANISTAN COLLECTIVE
ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE
CIS COLLECTIVE
NATO EU COLLECTIVE
RHMFIUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL
RUEABND/DEA HQS WASHINGTON DC
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT
RUEKJCS/JCS NMCC WASHINGTON DC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC

UNCLAS TASHKENT 000937

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR SCA/FO BOB DEUTSCH
DEPT FOR S/SRAP, SCA/CEN, SCA/RA, AND SCA/A
DEPT PASS FOR AID/ANE
DEPT PASS USTR FOR DELANEY AND DEANGELIS
DEPT PASS OPIC
DEPT PASS OES/ENV
DEPT PASS FOR TDA FOR STEIN AND GREENIP
USOECF FOR ENERGY ATTACHE
CENTCOM
FOR CSTC-A
DEPT PASS NSC FOR JWOOD
DEPT PASS TREASURY FOR MHIRSON, JCASAL, ABAUKOL, BDAHL,
AND MNUGET
OSD FOR SHIVERS
DEPT PASS COMMERCE FOR HAMROCK AND FONOVICH

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ENRG](#) [EFIN](#) [ETRD](#) [KPWR](#) [EAID](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SOCI](#) [SENV](#) [PBTS](#)

EAGR, AF, UZ

SUBJECT: Afghan Trans-Boundary Water Discussions: Maintaining
Transparency with the Central Asians

REF: KABUL 1459; NORLAND-DEUTSCH 6/1/09 E-MAIL (NOTAL)

¶1. (SBU) Reftel (A) notes that the Afghan government, with USAID and USFOR-A sponsorship, will hold a two-day conference on water management in early July. If it does not already plan to do so, we recommend that Afghanistan be encouraged to invite Central Asian neighbors such as Uzbekistan to take part in the conference. Uzbekistan, like Afghanistan, has vital interests at stake in the common management of the Amur Darya river basin, one of the five cited in reftel. Like all countries in this volatile neighborhood, Uzbekistan is deeply suspicious of any discussions surrounding regional water management to which it is not party. Uzbekistan is playing a significant role in supporting Afghanistan these days, in terms of electricity transfers and supply of non-lethal equipment to our forces via the Northern Distribution Network.

¶2. (SBU) While there is no guarantee the ever-perplexing Uzbeks would attend the conference even if invited, maintaining maximum transparency on any regional water-related discussions is in the U.S. interest. We have already seen signs (Ref B) that certain elements may be seeking to exploit isolated efforts to reach agreement on water issues by charging that "U.S.-sponsored" discussions are taking place or "working groups" being formed "without participation of downstream countries" -- an extremely effective disinformation tactic in the Central Asian context. We should not open ourselves up to such accusations. From our vantage point, we would urge that Uzbekistan and other Central Asian neighbors with interests in the water basins noted ref (A) be included in the proposed July conference hosted by Afghanistan, at least as observers.

NORLAND